

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Claims 27-41, 43 and 44 are pending in the present application. Of these, claims 27-37 are withdrawn from consideration. Claim 38 is independent.

Claims 41-44 were rejected as being indefinite for failing to distinctly point and claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. The claims have been amended to address this objection.

Claims 38-41 were rejected as being anticipated by Pierce (US Patent No. 6,152,956). Claims 45-51 were rejected as being anticipated by Kupiecki et al (US Patent No. 6,096,034). Claim 40 is rejected as being unpatentable over Pierce in favor of Wang (US Patent No. 6,379,379).

Discussion

Applicant submits that amended independent claim 38 is allowable over the Pierce since Pierce does not disclose or suggest "the sheath being folded over itself at a distal end, the sheath being pulled back and being everted when exposing the cover." Nowhere does Pierce disclose or suggest such a sheath. By way of example, and without limiting the scope of the claims, the sheath is illustrated and described in connection with Figs. 47-49 starting at page 20, line 15 of the present application.

Dependent claims 39-41, 43 and 44 are allowable since they depend from allowable independent claim 38 and because they recite independently patentable features.

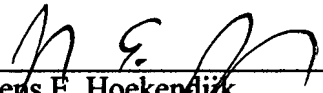
CONCLUSION

Applicant submits that all claims are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes a telephone

conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-412-3322.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date



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